Woodbine Under Its Own Rule

THE ONLY COMMUNITY IN THE WORLD COVERNED ENTIRELY BY JEWS. .

Woodbine a colony of Russian Hebrews in the northern part of Cape May county, N. J. was recently organized by the New Jersey Legislature into a borough with a political identity of its own. Officers were elected last week, and it now enjoys the distinction of being the only place in the world governed entirely by Jews. It was formerly a part of the township of Dennis.

The colony had its beginning twelve years ago when the Russian persecution of the Jews was at its height and when Hebrews in Ferner and England were doing all they

in France and England were doing all they could to get their people out of the Czar's empire. It was founded through the generaty of Baron de Hirsch.

He sent three men to Cape May county in the spring of 1891 to buy land and to establish there a refuge and a home for the sufferers who were being brought to this country by the boatload and dumped into New York's already overcrowded Ghetto. They got 5,300 acres, including all of Wood-line proper which at that time consisted bine proper, which at that time consisted

They bought all this land, but none of it had ever seen a plough and only a little was even half cleared. It was of white sandy loam, grown thick with scrub oak and stanted pine, swampy in spots and flat, with hardly a knoll to break the monotony of the stretch-almost the last place one would choose for a home and certainly about the ast place an American farmer would se-

The three men built cabins and did what they could in the way of clearing bits of the property. A year later thirty immigrants





MAJOR H. L. SABSOVICH.

bare remains of buildings, with broken windows, battered down doors and in ruin generally.

Through the Hirsch fund Woodbine immigrants were able to get a home and land on terms which would have been impossible under ordinary circumstances. The trustees of the fund had houses and other buildings put up and then deeded them, together with some land, over to any colonists who wanted a home and could make a cash payment of \$100. The trustees took a mortgage on the property for the buildings put up and then deeded them, together with some land, over to any colonists who wanted a home and could make a cash payment of \$100. The trustees took a mortgage on the property for the buildings put up and then deeded them, together with some land, over to any colonists who wanted a home and could make a cash payment of \$100. The trustees took a mortgage on the property for the buildings put up and then deeded them, together with some land, over to any colonists who wanted a home and could make a cash payment of \$100. The trustees took a mortgage on the property for the building put up and then deeded them, together with some land, over to any colonists who wanted a home and could make a colonists still but are, of course, a little more particular about the details than they were then. Most of the houses are two-story frame structures, containing from five to ten rooms and furnished with many modern improvements.

Besides adding the settlers in this way, the Hirsch Fund trustees have also centablished a big agricultural school at the colony, have put in an electric light plant and water works, and have, by offering sufficient bonus, been the means of bringing in most of the factory industries, which are really the muscle and bone of the community. The capital behind nearly all the factories is from outside sources, principally from Philadelphia. So that Woodbine, however much credit the Russian Hebrews may deserve for what they have actually accomplished, can hardly be said to be anything like a self-made community. The capita

their hats in their hands, as they had been compelled to do in Russia, and showing in the most humble manner consciousness of their own insignificance and abject position.

But, somehow, the first settlers got a foothold, and when another batch of fifty, just as ignorant and just as ragged as the

the savings which their fathers put away from the farm or business. In this way revenue from three or four sources is coming into the same family pot. The average family consists of about seven persons.

A remarkable thing about the factory hands is that almost every one has a home of his own. In fact, only about twenty-five of the 175 houses in the town occupied by seen employed in factories are rented houses. Industrial Woodbine is a small town of home-owners, and that is why all the places are so well kept up.

Wherever there is a dirty front yard or wherever a broken fence has been allowed to go unrepaired, that place can be set down as rented property. Neatness in this respect is further encouraged by a prize of



THE SCHOOL BUILDING.

\$10, which the De Hirsch Fund offers annually for the best-kept place in the town.

The total estimated cost of the houses occupied by factory employees is about \$160,000, and of this amount almost 40 per cent, has been paid off in full.

The earning capacity of the town, it is said, compares favorably with that of any other community of equal size in the country. More than \$160,000 a year, it is assid, compares favorably with that of any other community of equal size in the country. More than \$160,000 a year, it is assided in the second of the 200 families. Almosf without exception, the factory workers are sons or daughters of settlers or young settlers themselves who worked at a trade before coming to Woodbine. The older people stick to the farms or the stores.

Whether agricultural Woodbine is a success is doubtful, although it has without question been an indispensable factor in the success of the whole. Indeed, most attempts to establish Hebrew agricultural colonies, both in this country and in South America, have falled, and it has been argued, perhaps rather hastily, that Russian Hebrews can't be successful farmers, that they aren't adapted for that business, and that if they are to succeed they will have to stick to barter and trade.

Yet Hebrews don't always fail at farming, as is shown by the things that are

are as good farmers. Most of them, it is said, are just about making a living and paying the interest on the mortgage. Not one of them has his farm entirely paid for.

The soil is not suited for growing cereals nor for pasture, and they have to depend entirely on vegetables or fruit for their principal products. Fhiladelphia, fifty-six miles away is the nearest market, but most of the garden stuff and considerable of the fruit are used in home consumption.

All the farms have vinevards and some have orchards. One or two have arbors five or six hundred fees long covered with grape vines and big enough for a team of horses and a wagon to drive through, leading from the highway up to the door of the house. When the vines are loaded with fruit the arbors are said to be one of the most picturesque and quaint features about the colony, and people come from miles around to see them.

The houses on the farms are not so pretentious-looking as those in the borough project, but they are all kept up just as neatly. They are two-story buildings, box-shaped, like the one shown in the accompanying illustration, and with five or six rooms.

neatly. They are two-story buildings, box-shaped, like the one shown in the accompanying illustration, and with five or six rooms.

They are painted white and are decorated outside by long black strips nailed on the sides, which have been reported to represent the namber of mortgages on each farm, but which, the farmers themselves say, haven't anything whatever to do with mortgages. Inside, the country houses are more characteristically Jewish than those in the town.

The windows are shaded by plain white curtains of coarse fabrio the floors are without carpets or rugs, but are also without any spots of dirt. On the door posts of each room little tin shells are nailed containing the Hebrew proverbs. They are to ward off had spirits. In the dining rooms of most of the farmhouses also are cheap woodcuts of Moses and Aaron,

Everything about the farmhouse is kept in much better shape and much more tidy than in many American farmers' homes. Very few of the old people on the farms speak English. The women all wear clean white aprons, with clean white cloths wrapped tightly around their heads.

The men aren't so particular about their appearance, and some take pride in boasting that they are still wearing the same yellow coat that they brought over from Russia ten or twelve years ago.

Originally sixty-five farms of thirty acres each were laid out, but not more than half of them are occupied now. They are bought on the installment plan, just the same as the houses in the village, and bring different prices, according to the quality of the land and location.

Closely connected with the farming interest of Woodbine is the Baron de Hirsch Argicultural School for Jewish boys. It was founded in 1894 and is the only one of its kind in the world.

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BLACKSMITH AND WHEELWRIGHT SHOPS.

being accomplished at the agricultural school at Woodbine, and even on some of the farms.

Most of the settlers, it is true, come to Woodbine entirely ignorant of even the first principles of agriculture; but that is chiefly because they and their ancestors have not been allowed to hold land in Rus-

candidate shall be of sturdy physique, weighing not less than 100 pounds and with a fair chest measurement and height. The tuition is free, but the students are expected to pay for their board or to do extra work on the farm of 270 acres which is connected with the school.

Many of the boys who attend the school are fresh from Russia and have come to prepare the way for their fathers and families. In summer the boys are hired out on the farms all over New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

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The school is thoroughly equipped with a library, physical and chemical apparatus, a dairy, an apiary, greenhouses, incubators, blacksmith shops and all the other departments that go with a well-organized agricultural institution. In addition to being taught practical farming, the boys also go through rudimentary English courses and receive instruction in the Talmud.

They do most of the work on the school farm. They get up at 5:30 o'clock in the morning in the spring and are out in the fields before 7. They receive demerit marks for coming to work late, for quarrelling or disobeying orders, for taking fruit from the trees and for being careless with the tools.

Some of them know considerably less about farming than about other things. The last lad who got in from Russia a few weeks ago was sent over to the apiary. He picked the top off a beehive and came running back to the office yelling that he was on fire and burning up, and would somebody please throw a pail of water on him.

somebody please throw a pail of water on him.

They all march into the dining room for their meals in single file, wearing clean white jackets that are slipped on for the occasion. They are served at long, unspread wooden tables. Their food is prepared strictly according to the Mosaic law. Before they sit down to eat all turn toward Jerusalem, bow reverently and offer up a prayer of thanks. Nobody is allowed to speak during the meals. When any student wants anything he indicates his desire by raising his hand and a waiter attends to him.

After the meal is finished they all bow to the East again, repeat another prayer and march out without a word. They have a military company and a baseball and a football team.

A few girls attend the school, but their course of instruction is confined mostly to the dairy department. Numerous lectures and entertainments are given at the school, and the colonists are always invited, so that the institution, besides being a help to the farmers of Woodbine, also exerts a wholesome influence on the community at large.

recognised the fact that the schoolhouse is the best medium for Americanizing foreigners and have built up a fine public school system which comprises four public day, schools, with nine teachers and an attendance of more than 300. These schools are graded all the way from a kindergarten to a high school.

Only two of the teachers are of Hebrew descent, for the colonists want their children to learn to speak the English language perfectly and they think this will be more easily accomplished under the tutelage of Americans than under teachers of their own people. Besides, there is a night school attended by about seventy boys and girls who are obliged to work in the factories during the day.

Then there is also the Thalma Thora—the school of the law—where the young people study the Scriptures every afternoon for an hour after they have finished their duties in the public school. This sense which all the colonists seem to have of the importance of educating their children is one of the most remarkable things about the place. Several of the old settlers have sent their boys to college and one,



Michael Lipman, has a son who now Michael Lipman, has a son who now is a professor in Rutgers.

There is only one synagogue in the place, for the colonists are all Orthodox Jews, adhering faithfully to every detail of the Mosaic law. There is no regular rabbi, but a graduate of a French university who is the instructor in the Thalma Thora acts in that capacity. The place also has its official butchers, the schochet, who examines the lungs and vitals of all animals that are slaughtered.

amines the lungs and vitals of all animals that are slaughtered.

There are only about fifty gentile families in the place, and they have been brought there for the most part by the factories. They have a Baptist church. No-ill feeling ever shows itself between the two peoples. The colonists say that they are content to be let alone, and the gentiles are in such a hopeless minority that they never try to assert themselves.

The town has many clubs and benevolent organizations. There are the Civic Club for instructing the people in politics, an amateur theatrical club, a social and literary club, a girls' physical culture club, a volunteer fire department and a brass band.

The colonists believe in sending their children to dances and similar entertainments, and it is said that since recreation of this sort was introduced two years ago of this sort was introduced two years ago there has been a big change in the young people, boys as well as girls. They have, it is a seried, become more neat and tidy. It is a striking fact that in the entire history of the colony there has not been a single case which has called into the question the honor of any young woman of the place. It is interesting to note also that no colonist has ever been seen drunk on the

which was organized for that purpose. The only matters the settlers were interested in politically were their schools and their taxes, and it was through an appeal on the ground of injustice in these that the Legislature granted them a charter of incorporation.

incorporation.

They wanted to enlarge their schools, but representatives of the school board

school and the leader of the community ever since the colony was established. As told above, he is a university graduate and was one of the three men sent out by Baron de Hirsch to found the colony. There were sixteen nominees for Councilmen, and the tickets were split so hadly that some were elected by 65 votes. Those elected were M. L. Bayard, a manufacturer;



A FARMER'S HOUSE.

from Dennisville and other neighboring hamlets which would come in for a share of the taxes couldn't think of such a thing. The only time the Woodbine colonists were able to get anything through a school meeting was once when they took their wives and, marching to Dennisville in a body, stormed the meeting before the Dennisville people had a chance to call their women folk to the rescue.

The Woodbine colonists also showed the Legislature that they didn't have any

The Woodbine colonists also showed the Legislature that they didn't have any active voice on the Board of Assessors and that they were being taxed out of proportion to other places in the township. The bill giving them a separate political identity was passed on March 3. Woodbine heard about it the next morning, and

Joseph Rabinovich, a factory superintendent; Jacob Feldman, the postmaster; Dr. Joseph Joffe, the town physician; William Robinson, a hotelkeeper and the only Gentile on the board, and Max Potashniff, the butcher. All are pretty well off and all of the Hebrews are old settlers.

The histories of Bayard and Potashniff are especially interesting. Bayard came to the place from Russia in 1892. He didn't have a cent, and worked for other people until he got money enough to put up a little blacksmith shop.

Now he owns a big machine shop there worth \$25,000, and has other interests in the town valued at \$10,000. He manufactures attachments for automobiles and steam engines.



A VIEW OF WOODBINE.

all work was called off for the day. The brass band, which had been organized in anticipation of this very event, was called out in its half-developed condition, and all the musical prodigies at the agricultural school were brought out. There was a great hurrahing, a big tooting of horns, and not much music, with a mammoth display of fireworks, which had been bought in Dennisville itself.

The Civic Club got out posters announcing that there would be a big mass meeting at Werner Hall on the following night. The old settlers didn't like the way the Civic Club signed its name to the posters,

Potashniff also came to Woodbine from Russia in the early '90s. He had just money enough to buy the forequarters of a best. He began peddling meat from house to house, and now he owns butcher shops in many other places in the county, and, in addition to supplying the Jewish trade with local meat, has large quantities of Chicago beef shipped in for sale in other parts of the county.

He is building a big cold storage plant which will cost \$15,000, and he will also go into the ice manufacturing business, supplying the summer resorts along the coast. He is rich.

But the end of Woodbine's jubilation is not yet. The officers are to be installed on May 2 and everybody is then going to celebrate formally. It is going to be a Woodbine holiday.

The band is practising every night for the occasion, and if Michael McAmond of Sal City, who is drilling the players, can continue to stand the strain, it will probably be able to do a few stunts on the big day.

be able to do a few stunts on the big day. When the band practies now it goes where nobody can hear it, out in the woods about a mile from town, and tries marching to the music. Not that it objects to having people listen to its music, but the old settlers are getting hot again and have registered a kick against being disturbed at night. On inauguration day there will be a big



A GROUP OF PUPILS OF THE AGRICULTURAL SCHOOL

student wants anything he indicates his desire by raising his hand and a waiter attends to him.

After the meal is finished they all bow to the East again, repeat another prayer and marsh out without a word. They have a military company and a baseball and a football team.

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Those who have charge of the colony have

WAYS OF WOMEN AND BIRDS.

The Pet Hen-Ill-treated Birds—Missit Marriages Among Canaries.

A well-dreaged woman, her hands loaded with jewels, entered a bird hospital uptown the other day. Under her arm she carried a white bundle, out of which protruded, with quaint effect, a little coalblack head

She unwrapped some yards of white flamed, and out stepped a black pet hen.

"We feel so bad over Emily," said the woman. "My husband has been very siok, and now Emily is sick, too."

Emily was affectionate enough, however, to inspire some feeling on her own account. She took to following the doctor around, and would place herself on the edge of her dress when she sat down, and coax, in the absurd talking tone which heps have, to be taken up and petted. Her mistress had to take her away and handed ever a hospital fee of \$5.50.

"People never seem to think what a bird is used to in its natural state," said the bird doctor. "A boy brought me in a parrot one day with a broken leg; got by simply tumbling off its perch. They had forgotten that a parrot is a big bird, coouse to treat Emily. Both the bird doctor and her assistant worked over Emily with special care, for they had a notion that so unusual a pet must be endeared to the mistress by some tender association. It had belonged to a dead child, probably, and was clarished in its memory. Later when they found that Emily's mistress had

the surrounding towns go to Woodbine to do their trading. There are about thirty of these places of business, and in general appearance they don't differ much from the firm conviction that all the rest of the world was arrayed against them and that they must stand or fall together.

The process has gone on in this way ever since. Each year there have been many new arrivals, and each year those who were already settled have extended a helping hand to the others.

There has, accordingly, been a steady increase in the amount of workable land, a sound, broad development in the family life toward a good American standard and a remarkable growth in the town's educational, religious and commercial facilities, until now the Woodbine of twelve years ago, with its three shanties and tract of

GENERAL VIEW OF THE SCHOOL BUILDINGS.

fire escapes and forgotten is enough to wring a bird lover's heart. They are put out when it is warm and pleasant and left after the sun gets away from them, or after it turns cold and stormy.

The doctor pointed out the pride of the hospital, a nestfull of baby canaries.

"It's easy enough to raise canaries if the parents are well mated," she said; "I mean if they are fond of each other.

"It's very curious to watch the working of the law of natural selection in the mating of the law of natural selection in the mating of canaries in captivity. Why shouldn't they like one bird as well as another? But they don't. If they don't like each other, they will quarrel and fight and sometimes eat the eggs.

"While the mother is sitting on the eggs it is her mate's business to feed her. But if he doesn't like her, he won't do it. Some times she gets cranky and refuses to sit on the eggs. I have known the male bird to go and sit on the eggs, perhaps he won't help her feed the babies. Possibly she is the one who refuses, and sometimes they hoth leave the little ones to starve. But if the mates are suited with each other, everything goes as smooth as velvet. Instructive lesson, isn't it?"

In a big cage in the window two nice

little green lovebirds were at that moment illustrating the beauties of a happy home. When both are well, Darby will bring Dorothy her food out of pure uxoriousness, as she is perfectly well able to pick it up herself. But now Darby was ill, and Dorothy was affectionately bringing him choice bits from the seedbox. In the intervals of feeding they would cross their bills lovingly, an action as much like a human kiss as anything not human can be. "If Darby dies, said the birds friend, soberly, "I am afraid Dorothy will pine away and die, too. They do sometimes."

GREATER POWER THAN NIAGARA. Vast Electrical Project Being Carried Out at Victoria Path.

From the Boston Transcript. From the Boston Transcript.

An empire builder's visionary hope is soon to be realized in Africa. In 1852 David Livingstone discovered Victoria Falls; in 1861 he visited them again and was still able to record that no other white man had even seen the wonder. In 1873 it was said that but twelve Europeans had seen Victora Falls; twenty years later Cecil Thodos had conceived his "Cape to Cairo" telegraph; by 1800 that daring enterprise was complete, and the empire builder had already addressed his

reatless spirit to a "Cape to Cairo" railway.
"We propose now," he wrote, "to go on and
cross the Zambeel just below the Victoria
Falls. I should like to have the spray of the

water over the carriages."

Even to this last picturesque detail, that dream will "come true" before next Christmas. Day; and men still called young, who nevertheless were born before Livingstone carved his initials on the rocks above the falls, will be able to take the train at Cape Town, travel more than 1.500 miles without change and cross the Zambesi not much more than a hundred yards below the African Niagara, at a point where the spray that bounds back from a fall of 400 feet-will dash the windows of the cars.

To-day the engineers of Mr. Rhodes's To-day the engineers of Mr. Rhodes's South African Company are planning the details of a great electric plant which shall utilize the water power of Victoria Falls. In America there is a strong sentimental opposition to the prostitution of Niagara's beauty to commercial purposes; in South Africa no such protest is heard. It takes generations of wealth and culture to develop the sentiment which defends beauty against utility; in a new country everything is sacrificed to the necessities of the pioneers. Coal and, wood are scarce in South Africa. Every article in the manufacture of which

electric energy is essential must be imported; and the installation of this enormous electric plant will be the beginning of native manafacturing and will make poe ble the development of mines within a ridius of 200 miles which would otherwise remain idel for lack of power.

Moreover, Victoria Falls, unake Niagara, possess little beauty. The volume of water in the Zambesi is, in the rainy sensore, five it times the volume that comes down from Lake Erie. The height of the iteria falls is almost three times the height of Niagara, and yet the African cataract, as ompared with our American wonder, will never create a scenic sensation. At Niagara, to each stand off and see the huge mass of water tumble over the edge of a precipice and watch it drop the entire height of the falls. Will historia Falls it is different. Imagine in the river bed, at right angles to the course of the stream, grean, narrow, crack like fissures in glaciers, about 80 yards wide and 60 feet deep. Into this crack the water falls and escapes at the bottom through similar zigzag fissures of the same depth, One cannot see the water falling and escapes at the bottom through is militar zigzag fissures of the same depth, one can see the high columns of miss caped dish. There is little of the spectacour in the process. One can hear the roar Living with the wind, make all the scenic effect the feet of water the word and compresses, rebounding to a great high the wind, make all the scenic effect the feet of water the word of the servery depth of the water falls, and carrying spray wilb it. Described the water falls, and carrying spray wilb it, because the water of the server of mist, bending grace fully with the wind, make all the scenic effect the feet of water the word of the water of the water